

Vice President for Research and Associate Provost

The Office of the Vice President for Research and Associate Provost (VPR/AP) has overall responsibility for research conduct, administration, policy, and compliance. It oversees interschool units, and stewards research relationships with US government agencies, industry, foundations, and foreign sponsors. In June 2006, Professor Claude Canizares took up the position of vice president for research and associate provost when Professor Alice Gast left MIT to assume the presidency of Lehigh University.

A number of significant organizational changes took place in the 2006–2007 academic year. The VPR/AP took primary responsibility for oversight of MIT Lincoln Laboratory on behalf of the provost (previously, Lincoln Laboratory had reported to Professor Canizares as associate provost). The Office of Sponsored Programs now reports directly to the VPR/AP. A search was initiated for a new director of OSP following the departure of the incumbent, Mr. Patrick Fitzgerald; former director Julie Norris was recruited as interim director. The Office of Intellectual Property Counsel, previously reporting to the VPR/AP, was merged under the newly arrived general counsel, Mr. R. Gregory Morgan. The Computational and Systems Biology Initiative was moved from this office to the new Department of Biological Engineering, and the Earth System Initiative was added as a formal unit reporting to the VPR/AP.

Two major new research activities were initiated in 2006–2007, the MIT Energy Initiative (MITEI) and the Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology (SMART), both reporting to the VPR/AP (SMART's formal start was in the fall of 2007). MITEI was formed as an interdisciplinary umbrella organization that encompasses activities in all five schools. Professor Ernest Moniz was named director and Professor Robert Armstrong associate director. It is administratively co-located with the Laboratory for Energy and Environment. The SMART agreement with the National Research Foundation of Singapore calls for MIT's first major international research facility, to be located adjacent to the campus of the National University of Singapore. The founding director is Professor Thomas Magnanti, who just stepped down as dean of engineering. SMART will house an eventual five interdisciplinary research groups, of which the first one, in infectious diseases, was established in June 2007. MIT faculty will rotate to and from Singapore over the life of each group, so that eventually approximately five faculty will be at the facility at any given time.

The VPR/AP office also helped oversee the establishment of significant international relationships with Portugal and Abu Dhabi, and instituted a more regular process for reviewing and approving such activities.

Readers should consult the individual reports on each of the laboratories, centers, programs, and offices that report to the VPR/AP to learn about research highlights and accomplishments. A few notable changes/transitions include the following:

- In July 2006, Dr. Eric Evans became the director of MIT Lincoln Laboratory, taking over from Dr. David Briggs after eight years of service. Evans joined

Lincoln Lab in 1988 and served in positions of increasing responsibility. In 1999 he was appointed head of the Air and Missile Defense Technology Division.

- The Harvard-MIT Division of Health Sciences and Technology inaugurated the MIT Athinoula A. Martinos Imaging Center. Directed by Professor John Gabrieli, the center is a fully operational brain imaging research center located at the McGovern Institute for Brain Research.
- In January 2007, the W.M. Keck Foundation Center for Extreme Quantum Information Theory was created. Known as xQIT, the center is led by professors Seth Lloyd, director, and Jeffery Shapiro, codirector. The xQIT faculty are conducting research into the fundamental physics of information processing.
- In AY2007, the Institute for Soldier Nanotechnologies (ISN) contract was renewed for a second five year period as one of the United States Army's University Affiliated Research Centers (UARC), to take effect in July 2007. It is now under the leadership of a new director, Professor John Joannopoulos. UARCs maintain a strategic relationship with the Department of Defense (DOD) and provide or maintain DoD essential engineering, research and/or development core capabilities. In particular, the ISN mission is to advance soldier survivability through basic research and technology maturation. Army basic research funding for the ISN totals approximately \$50 million dollars over five years.
- After 23 years, Dr. Joseph Salah stepped down as director of Haystack Observatory. Prior to the appointment of a permanent director, an ad hoc "futures" committee was established to conduct a review of the Observatory. Dr. Alan Whitney was appointed acting director for the interim.

The Office of the VPR continues to work with other institutions and cognizant federal agencies on various policy issues of importance to research universities. In addition to the overarching issue of research funding, prime examples include export controls, research compliance, visa policies, and underrecovery of indirect costs.

In FY2007, MIT's total research volume reached \$598M, an increase of \$11M or 2% over FY2006. For several years, research volume has essentially remained flat, especially when corrected for inflation, reflecting the flat or declining federal spending in these areas. This office convened several engagement groups to devise strategies for attracting additional research support from both federal and non-federal sources.

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